

00388

c. 1962/07/25

STATUS REPORT
OF THE
TASK FORCE SOUTHEAST ASIA

COVERT ANNEX - CAMBODIA
(18 JULY - 25 JULY)

1. Several recent reports indicate the existence of two Khmer Krom (Cambodian residents of South Vietnam) armed guerrilla bands operating in South Vietnam. Some reports state that these bands are operating to protect Cambodian residents of South Vietnam from persecution both from the Diem government and from the Viet Cong. Other reports indicate that the bands have connections with both the Cambodian Government and the Viet Cong and may be operating as a sort of embryonic nationalist irredentist movement with the idea that if South Vietnam falls, they may be able to exert pressures to regain some territory for Cambodia. These same reports state one of the bands was responsible for the Vinh Lac incident. Still other reports state the Viet Cong regard the groups as the "Sam Sary gang." (Sam Sary was formerly a minister in the Cambodian Government who moved in opposition to Sihanouk in late 1958 and was forced to flee Cambodia. He has since been in Thailand and South Vietnam reportedly the head of one of the Cambodian dissident groups.) These reports state the Viet Cong intend to step up activity against the "Sam Sary gang."

2. While there is no precise information clarifying these conflicting reports or establishing the strength and organization of these bands, there nevertheless is sufficient information to warrant the inclusion of these bands as targets for collection of intelligence information in support of the counterinsurgency effort.

DECLASSIFIED

E. O. 11652, SEC. 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 AND 3.4

CIA Ltr. (WKK-77-657)
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